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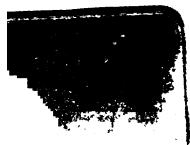
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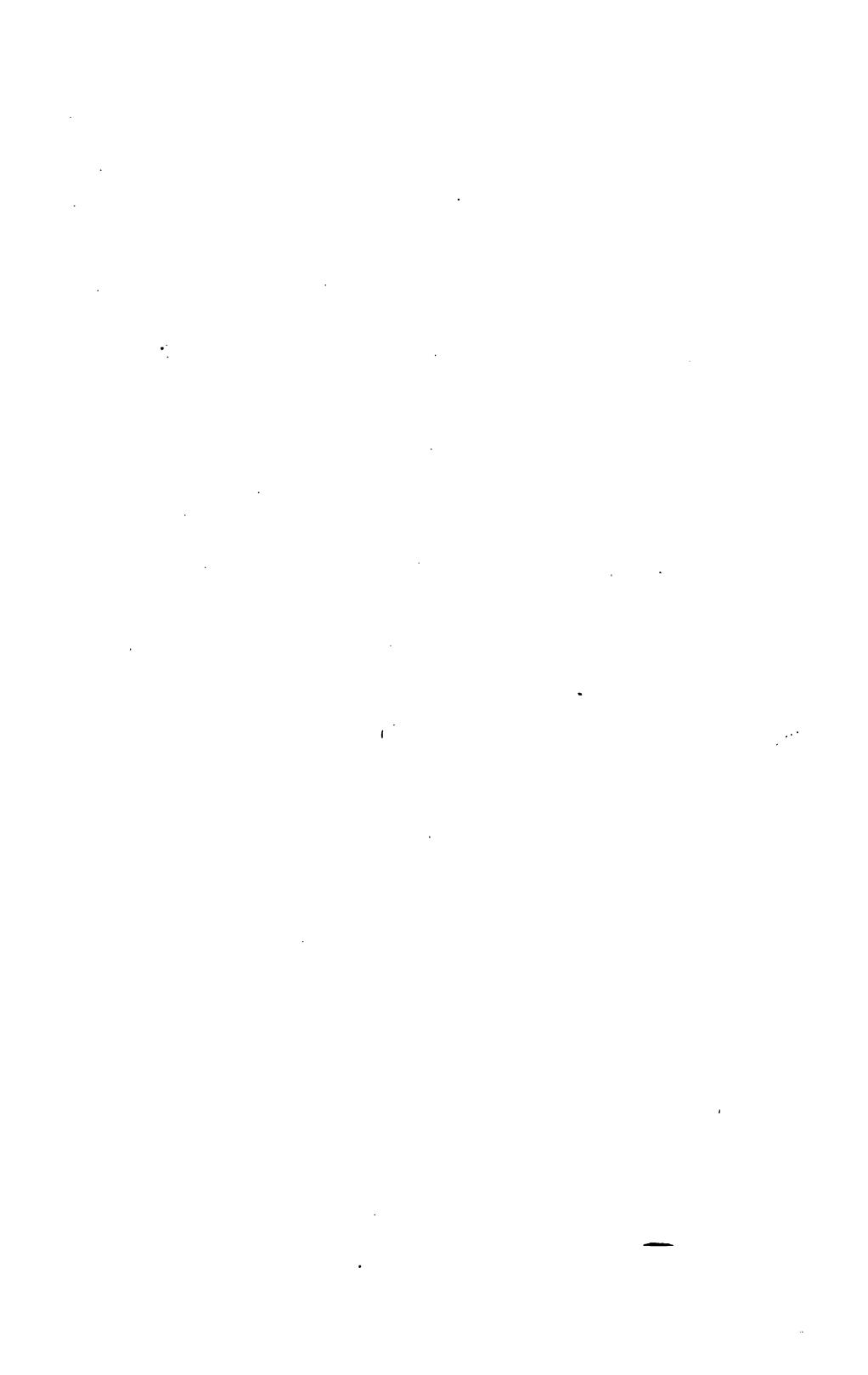
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MEN AND MEASURES;

OR,

THE POLITICAL PANORAMA.

A Satire.

" Where is this minister? where is the band
Of ready slaves, who at his elbow stand
To hear and to perform his wicked will?

* * * *

O my poor Country!—weak, and overpower'd
By thine own sons—ate to the bone—devour'd
By vipers, which, in thine own entrails bred,
Prey on thy life, and with thy blood are fed."

CHURCHILL.

LONDON:

JOSEPH THOMAS, 1, FINCH LANE, CORNHILL,

March, 1839.

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Selkirk
1837
4.12.72

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MEN AND MEASURES;

OR,

THE POLITICAL PANORAMA.

I.

“ How long! how long, shall England’s sons deplore
The withering curse that hangs upon her shore ?
Oh, still how long—doth righteous Heaven ordain
That loyal hearts shall breathe their prayers in vain;
And vile Ambition be permitted still
To blind and mould its victims to its will ;
Whilst fools, of Freedom’s counterfeit elate,
Bow down to knaves both in and out of state?
The fire of wrath shall brand the villains all;
But when,—oh when, shall tardy vengeance fall,
And once again the trembling world behold
England assert her proudest title, *Old?* ”

As late my country's wrongs my soul opprest,
The verse thus burst spontaneous from my breast;
Whilst now, to louder indignation stirred,
My voice, though vainly perhaps, again is heard.

When foes and treachery surround a throne
That virtue, youth, and beauty call their own;
And worst of men beneath the patriot's mask
Smile to betray, and in its sunshine bask;—
When virtue, honour, wisdom, truth, no more
Preside, and watch a nation's councils o'er,
But lust of power, or worse, the thirst of gain,
Fills each base breast, and holds unholy reign:
Ambition barters for a place and name
Our country's honour, interest, and its fame;
And greedy Avarice, grown too bold for stealth,
In the broad noon grasps all a nation's wealth.
When these have rule, and lord it o'er the land,
And the realm groans beneath Oppression's hand,
The laws perverted, laughed at, and despised,
And foul corruption working undisguised;—
E'en Murder's self dares organize her bands,
And bid her minions lift their blood-stained hands
In face of day, to do their deeds of hell,
Securely plotted in some darkened cell;

Whilst banished Freedom, haunting still the shore,
Weeps o'er the isle she loved and ruled of yore,
As Ruin breathless waits with all her train
The word that bids her sweep o'er hill and plain,
And all that's glorious, beautiful, and good,
Raze to the earth, that many an age hath stood
Like beacons planted on the steeps of time,
To light the world, by Heaven's own hand sublime !

When Vice, too, reigning in the moral world,
Prone to the dust fair Virtue's shrine hath hurled,
And reared her brazen throne,—whilst at her call
Her high-born slaves in prostrate worship fall,
And thousand followers with their homage speed,
And hastening on, the great example plead ;
Shall he be silent in these guilty times
Whom bounteous heaven hath blest with force of rhymes?
No, surely cursed is he who hath the power,
And wields it not in such a threatening hour.
Can he indulge in vain poetic dreams,
Attune his lyre but to gentlest themes,
And sing of birds—and flowers—and placid streams,—
When his loved country bleeds at every vein,
And thickening ills descend around like rain ?
No, duty bids him in his might oppose
Religion's, honour's, and that country's foes—





In conscious virtue mailed, he scorns alike
All these and Prudence, that forbid to strike ;
Though by his side there stand not one ally,
He takes his ground, and dares the host defy.

For him who thus would brand in Satire's lays
The guilty men of these degenerate days ;
Who boasts no merit, save an honest name,—
Who asks no favour, and who seeks no fame ;—
Would that his power were equal to his will,
And, as his cause is just, great were his skill ;
Would that his verse could burn as glows his zeal,
And pierce as deeply as his heart can feel.

Come, then, my Muse, let us our task pursue,
Nor fear that Heaven will lend the needful clue
To thread the labyrinth of each placeman's heart,
Lay bare its meanness and expose its art ;
All malice far away, truth for our guide,
And candour, justice, prompting at our side,
Drag from each hole and corner of the state
Those clinging wretches whom the *mob* call GREAT ;
Tear off the dark disguise from knave and fool,
Whom angry fate hath cursed with power and rule ;
Men whose base minds such hideous features own,
“ As to be hated need but to be ” known.

II.

But since kind fate, in some propitious hour,
May waft these numbers to the royal bower ;
Let me in hope such lot shall bless my lay,
First lowly kneel and duteous homage pay—
Lay at our Sovereign's feet, nor she refuse,
The humble offering of a loyal muse.

VICTORIA, hail ! the mistress of a throne,
That *once* could awe, and called the world its own !
When England's voice forth like a whirlwind rushed,
And monarchs quaked, and hostile climes were hushed :
When Glory's light hung o'er her like a sky,
And Freedom reigned and waved her flag on high :—
When her proud ships, encircling every shore,
Of foes regardless as the tempest's roar—
Like sea-born creatures that their nurture drew
From ocean's breast, and o'er it conquering flew—
Prompt to avenge and ever quick to save,
Their iron sides caressed by every wave—
Were borne triumphant, and their fiery breath,
More feared than storms and terrible as death :—
Then, honour, worth, and genius, armed with power,
Won for these realms a kingdom's richest dower,

And far and wide, bade plenteous streams to flow,
Of all the blessings that a land can know.

VICTORIA, hail ! the mistress of a throne,
That *now* scarce dares to call this isle its own !
Betrayed and sold—her day of greatness o'er,
Lo ! Britain prostrate rules the world no more.
How changed—how fallen—from her high estate,
Herself now trembling on the brink of fate,
Too weak for fear, and far too mean for hate ;
Insulted, mocked, her ministers the sport,
And made the dupes of every foreign court ;
Her flag—that once shed terror o'er the seas,
Now shrinks itself at every adverse breeze ;
Her voice—once wing'd with vengeance from on high,
As little heeded as the sea-bird's cry.

Where are our Navies now that all could dare,
Nor less achieve ? lo ! echo answers, Where ?
The iron hands,—the hearts of oak of old,
That race renowned, the British tars, the bold ?
Behold the remnant of our former boast,
The half-manned vessels that disgrace our coast ;
By folly stripped of all their strength and pride,
Tossed to and fro, like logs upon the tide ;
With scarcely hands to bear them to the fight,
Or, from the contest to secure their flight ;

Scattered at intervals they lie a prey
E'en to their weakest foes, in danger's day.
'Twas not from ships like these that Nelson hurled
His dreaded thunders o'er the echoing world ;
And when his last and glorious day was done,
And Victory weeping crowned her dying son ;
Oh ! ask his brave companions of that hour,
Who round him fought and heard his words of
power,
If 'twere in things, such helpless things, as these
They wept the fallen monarch of the seas ?

Daughter of Albion ! doth not Nelson's name
Fill thy young soul with loftiest dreams of fame ?
Hath not the magic sound for thee a spell
To fire thy breast beyond what tongue may tell ?
He fell indeed in Glory's arms sublime ;
But lives, and shall live to the end of time :
He fell—blessed fate ! ere yet the dark day came
That steeped the land for which he bled in shame :
Whilst England,—nay, 'twere bitter task to tell,
More of a tale on which thou weep'st to dwell ;
Yes, weep'st, when turning to this gloomy scene,—
From the proud day of glory that hath been ;
We will not think that aught unworthy stains
The generous blood that flows within thy veins ;

That thy breast owns one feeling, or one thought,
False to that faith for which thy fathers fought ;
That faith, those principles, which to thy line
Gave England's sceptre, and which made it thine.

Thou Royal Maid of Brunswick's lengthening line !
What splendid dreams, what glorious hopes were thine !
What joy through all th' exulting realm prevailed,
When Britain first its youthful Sovereign hailed :
Like some bright star upon whose lovely rays
Admiring thousands cannot choose but gaze,
Thou sat'st enthroned, and from thy earliest birth,
Hadst drawn the anxious view of all the earth ;
Tribes, kingdoms, empires, turned their eyes to thee,
As though thy glance were fraught with destiny.
Thy subjects rushed to pay the homage meet,
And laid their hearts a tribute at thy feet :
Gave all a loyal people could bestow,
And all that happiest kings or queens can know :
They saw thee beautiful—and hoped thee true,
And paid their love, ere yet the debt was due.
Alas ! a gloomy change hath stolen o'er
Their dream and *thine*, and joy is heard no more.

Yet hail, VICTORIA ! mistress of a throne,
That soon again shall call the world its own !

What though delusion, strong delusion, wind
Its false dark fancies round the people's mind ;
And Reason strive to penetrate in vain
The veil of darkness, and resume her reign :
Whilst scorning all right principles and rules,
Slaves will be slaves—and fools will still be fools :
'Tis thy blest destiny, 'tis thine to see,
As once, thy country, "glorious, great, and free!"
As to thyself be to thy country just,
Knaves would compel thee to betray thy trust ;—
The men that bask for ever in the blaze
Of royal favour and obscure its rays,
Drink up those streams of bounty that would flow,
And millions bless, that wait in vain below.
Such would persuade thee that some factious bawl,
Or mob's loud clamour, is the country's call :
Whilst if thy firm and faithful friends should seek
To avert a danger, 'tis thy "foes" that speak.
List not to such as these, whose only fear
Is that the truth should reach the Sovereign's ear.
Forth from thy presence cast them, and rely
Upon a nation's love and loyalty :
For how canst thou a sovereign's oath fulfil,
When nought is left thee but a fettered will ?
Hemmed round by knaves and sycophants, that strive
To circumscribe thy just prerogative.

True, on the current coin we view imprest
The royal image full and fair confess :
But on each word that issues from the throne,
We grieve to find nought of the Sovereign's own.
All bear such marks, that e'en an idiot's eye
Can trace the impress of a spurious die :
How can we prize them when on all we find
The hateful features of a M——'s mind ?

Oh ! breathe the word, and thou shalt quickly prove
The might—the fervour—of a people's love :
But say “ begone,” the galling chains are riven,
And thou and thine free as the winds of heaven !
Whilst one wide shout shall burst from shore to shore,
And thou be blest as ne'er was Queen before.
Around thee call the tried, the good, the wise,
Thine own best friends and Honour's firm allies ;
These at the helm, thy throne shall surely stand,
And wealth and happiness o'erflow the land.

Forgive the zealous muse, whose honest lay
Would tell what those around thee will not say ;
Her song is daring—but her only aim
The Country's welfare, and the Sovereign's fame.

III.

“Times change,” and with them men and manners too:
Some laud the old—and some extol the new;
One boasts of days in which himself was born,
His hearer smiles, and views the past with scorn.
Senex, of course, with wisdom on his tongue,
Is ever crying, “Ah, when I was young!”
Forgets he sinned, though in a different way,
And rails at vices of the present day.
The son, in love with pleasure’s modern school,
Flies to his dice, and deems his sire a fool.
But which was happier, or the new or old—
Which had more wit or greater store of gold—
Howe’er this point the doctors may decide,
One thing is clear, and cannot be denied;
Judging of features as their owners pass,
There’s now no scarcity of native brass.
Each modern knave, unlike the ancient race,
Now wears his shame emblazoned on his face;
And though our sins be great, we must allow
Hypocrisy is least in fashion now.

Time was, when merit some reward might claim,
And statesmen gloried in a spotless name:

Ere yet Preferment singled out and shed
Her richest favours on the meanest head ;
And Vice, unblushing—bold—notorious—sate
Crowned with the highest honours of the state :
Ere yet each candidate for power and place
Were called to prove his title to disgrace ;
And all for office were pronounced unfit,
Whom heaven had blessed with virtue, sense, or wit.
Yes, there was once, nor long gone by, a time,
When less respect was paid to rogues and crime,
When something more than meanness was required
In those who ruled, or who to rule aspired ;
And men of wisdom, and of good report,
Alone were trusted, and esteemed at Court.

But, since the “March of Intellect,” hath made
Such change in morals, politics, and trade ;
(Such rapid strides, that time alone can show
How far these blest mutations still shall go ;)
We have not now to climb, with weary feet,
Up Virtue’s rugged road to Honour’s seat,
A thousand shorter paths before the eye,
All smooth, macadamized, and open lie,
Whereon Ambition’s chariot wheels may roll,
By Shame led safely to the destined goal.

The only passport that is needed now,
Is “*rogue*” engraved upon the claimant’s brow.

Look well around,—observe the men in place,—
And try if closest scrutiny can trace
Aught like a virtue,—if one breast be fired
With that true patriot zeal that once inspired;
And such success thy labour shall repay,
As the fool’s errand wins on April day.
If place then tempt thee, act no longer well,
But strive like them in meanness to excel;
And though no sympathy with worth, thou’lt find
They have a fellow-feeling for their kind ;
Those who have gained the walls of power will throw
The rope to hoist up those that stand below.
Point out one knave that’s greater than another,
And quick Lord J—n shall hail him as a brother ;
Whilst *virtuous* M — e lends a helping hand,
And seats him safe and snugly in command.

These are the statesmen of your modern days,
Whom fools and slaves bespatter with their praise ;
Who talk of Reason, and yet use her light,
Like thieves dark lanthorns prowling through the night,
Through guilty labyrinths to thread their way,
And lead their steps securely to their prey :—

Whose patriotic zeal's displayed alone
In love to every country but their own ;
And this they prize but as it may be sold,
Just in proportion as it brings them gold.
Weak as corrupt, yet skilled to cheat a mob ;
Prompt at a trick, and adepts at a job ;
With heartless care, and calculation nice,
On Britain's sons per score can fix a price ;
Like wholesale dealers trade in human life,
And thousands send to die in foreign strife.

Then let us take them on the simplest plan,
Just as they come in groups, or man by man.

IV.

How blest yon statesman that in age displays
The fire and vigour of his youthful days ;
Whose powers permit him, unimpaired by time,
To indulge the passions of his manhood's prime,
Unchecked by foolish fears, and ne'er as yet
Hath known remorse, or felt one vain regret ;
Though long his private, as his public life,
Hath been with virtue and with right at strife.

What is his country's weal or woe to him ?
The people all may sink, so he can swim.
Self is his god—sole motive—object—end—
And all his schemes to this loved centre tend :
Alternate plans of pleasure, power, and pride,
Engross his soul, and every hour divide ;
If one should fail, another source he tries,
To love, wine, politics, by turns he flies.
When sore defeat attends him in debate,
With ease he flings aside the cares of state,
Forgets disgrace, his country, and the House,
And holds soft dalliance with a neighbour's spouse ;
Finds balm and bliss in Beauty's melting charms,
And sweet oblivion in a _____'s arms.
Happy the man with such a conscience blessed !
Of rank too, place, and ample means possessed :
Heaven might have granted something more of brains,
But thought it best to give in scanty grains ;
With hand as sparing, too, endowed his heart,
Yet gave some portion of that fatal art
Which for a season wins its guilty way,
And aids its owner only to betray—
That cunning which, in spite of all their care,
Has thousand villains led to dance in air.
The only wonder, centuries hence, will be
How England could be fooled by such as he,

And to the verge of ruin brought by one
She blushes then, once to have called her son.
And still, with growing wonder, every age
Shall read this stranger tale on History's page :
That a young Queen, with every charm endowed,
To whom the mightiest monarchs would have bowed—
Within whose call, of England's sons the best,
By fame beloved, by all the good carest,
Stood ready at her slightest breath to fly,
To dare, endure, and in her cause to die—
Should make a man, but by his vices known,
Whom virtue, honour, dared but to disown,
And Heaven alone can tell for what strange end—
Her guide, companion, and her besom friend ;
The strange associate of her morning hour,
Her noontide council, and her evening bower ;
Whose shadow darkened o'er the palace walls,
Like some bad genius stalking through its halls ;
And spoke of mischief, with as sure a sign
As it proclaimed the hour to ride or dine.
Hoary old age with blooming youth allied !
And Vice with Virtue shining by its side.
Unnatural friendship ! and from which could flow
To Britain nought but sure disgrace and woe !
Had this been seen a few score years before,
Some fifty witches had been burnt, or more.

V.

But, lo ! what objects those that soar on high,
 Their white wings fluttering through th' astonished
 sky?

Countless addresses ! all well penned—sincere ;
 And answers wet with many a grateful tear !
 Joy ! joy to all ! for Durham's lord once more,
 All safe and sound, hath touched the English shore.
 Shout, all ye people ! lo, the conqueror's come !
 And you, ye batteries, why are ye so dumb ?
 From rebel tribes, far o'er the heaving main,
 He comes ! he comes ! like Sawney—"bock again!"
 Ready to prove that he's the wisest man
 Who shuns a foe and danger, when he can :
 That he's as brave as any ever born,
 Who flies the field, and braves a nation's scorn.
 Ah, happy Durham ! 'tis not thine to die
 By lead, or steel, and all unburied lie ;
 Thine is another fate the gods decree,
 For smell of powder hath no charms for thee ;
 Nor squibs, nor crackers, in thy youthful years,
 E'er scorched thy hands, or stunned thy mother's
 ears ;

No bursting cannon e'er was doomed to mar
Thy hopeful features with unsightly scar ;
And now thou leav'st, in manhood's riper day,
The game of war to those who love to play.
But, safe and prudent as thy flight appeared,
To greater danger still thy course was steered ;
For, if with one weak foe thou daredst not cope,
'Tween whigs and tories what hast thou to hope ;
If *one* could find more work than thou couldst do,
Oh ! help thee, Heaven, to bear the blows of *two* !
Mark ! where with Evans, arm in arm, he goes,—
The pair discoursing of their mutual woes,
And vainly looking for some brightening trace
Of hope and comfort in each other's face :
Alike renowned ! and both at home again,—
The one from Canada, and one from Spain.

Thus wits will talk, and thoughtless mortals
smile ;
But there be hearts with graver thoughts the while.
Thou man, whose soul all paltry pay disdains,
And ask'st for nought but honour for thy pains ;
Scarce eight revolving moons have shed their light,
Since Britain saw thee vanish from her sight
In pomp arrayed, and armed with kingly power,
To crush Rebellion in its infant hour.

Shipped off in haste, by double-dealing friends
(Who ought would ship to serve their private ends),
A sordid crew, who, revelling here at home
Midst ill-got wealth, were none inclined to roam,
And fearful lest thy stubborn tongue at Court
Should mar their plans, and spoil their godly sport.
Full well they knew to bait the treacherous hook,
The prey was greedy, and the tinsel took :
Their end attained, and easy now at heart,
They view with joy their haughty dupe depart,
His stately vessel, groaning 'neath the weight
Of costly wines—and equipage—and plate.

Behold him, then, with all his princely train,
Begirt with troops upon the hostile plain ;
In wretched bands before his wandering eye,
Half arm'd, and few, the rebel forces lie.
Strike, Durham ! strike ! one well directed blow,
To rise no more, shall prostrate lay the foe.
Strike ! Britain cries, ere yet it be too late ;
Strike ! Duty bids, and leave the rest to fate.
Alas ! he stands like Prudence cut in stone,
Weighing his country's safety with his own ;
But honour—fame—all nobler motives fail,
Opposed to self, that downwards draws the scale.
Possessing powers greater than before
A subject knew, he loudly calls for more ;

And till it come, no rebel, 'tis decreed
By Durham's hand, shall either hang or bleed.
And still he calls ; but 'tis to *friends* who mind
His idle bawlings little as the wind.
Afraid alike to sanction or defend,
Nor grace, nor further powers, will they send.
The man must answer for himself alone,
Both for his deeds and what he leaves undone ;
Themselves in danger, it behoves them first
To guard against the tempest ere it burst.
Had but one spark of patriot virtue fired,
Or hope of Virtue's praise, his breast inspired,
He would have lightly prized his best heart's blood,
And had no thought but for his country's good :
But whilst he trembled for his paltry head,
More wide the flames of Insurrection spread :
And then had Britain known no firmer friend,
No braver son on whom she might depend,
Her rule had ceased beyond the Western wave,
And lands been lost that Durham went to save.
He found Rebellion yet too weak for strife,
A new-born thing one stroke had reft of life ;
Left it a giant stalking o'er the land,
To fall by nobler Colborne's single hand :
And homeward flies this truth, at last believed,
Who herds with knaves is sure to be deceived.

Yes, thanks to Heaven ! though sadly changed indeed,
England hath still her friends in time of need ;
And, oh ! how weak ! how fallen ! will she be,
When her last hope is in such men as he !

But though all proud—despotic as thou art—
Whate'er thy sins may be of head or heart :
Thou art not yet so abject and so base,
As is the best of that perfidious race,
Who not thee only, but their country sold—
Themselves, their Sovereign, all—for place and gold.
For *thee* deceived ! in time relenting hate
Shall turn to pity, and deplore thy fate :
And when Lord Durham and his luckless lot
Shall for long centuries have been forgot,
Their guilty names, on Infamy's black page,
Shall live and glare through every future age.
And wheresoe'er their festering bones shall lie,
(Nor let them, Heaven, rot 'neath an English sky ;
Here, in thy mercy let them not be laid,
To taint the land they plundered and betrayed ;)—
All things obscene shall trace their slimy scrawl,—
And kindred vipers hiss them as they crawl :—
The Winds shall fling their scornful mutterings
there—
No friend shall bless them, and no foe shall spare :—

And every foot that there by chance shall stray,
Shall spurn their dust, and sickening turn away :
Whilst for their monument a pile shall rise
Of curses heaped on curses to the skies,
Breathed from the hearts of millions loud and deep,
Outlasting time, and still defying sleep !

VI.

Who are the men that dare to stand between
A loyal people and their gracious Queen,
And intercept the blessings which her hand
Would freely scatter o'er a grateful land ?
The placeman cried, when setting forth his claim
To public gratitude and future fame ;
And boasting of those deeds, succeeding times
Will rightly think are much akin to crimes.
Stand forth, Lord John ! and truth the world shall tell
What he who asked the question knows full well—
Stand forth—for, on the record of disgrace,
A Russell's name shall hold conspicuous place.
Knit not thy brows—the Muse a lordling's frowns
Regards as little as the meanest clown's,
When roused to wrath, and Justice bids her strike,
High-born or low, all vice to her 's alike ;

And whilst she brands the minions of a Court,
She knows no fear, and glories in the sport.

Heavens ! that a man in Britain born and bred—
Nursed on her bosom, by her bounty fed—
Should lift his hand, and turn his deadly strife,
Against the breast that warmed him into life :
League with her foes, and sever every tie
Of honour, gratitude, and loyalty :—
His birthright sell—and truck his Country's cause,
For the rank incense of a Mob's applause ;
And as the dog rejects all other food,
Whose lips have once been dipped in human blood—
His coarse and craving appetite can live,
But on such garbage as that Mob can give—
Foul, stinking praise ! that good men all disdain,
The putrid drivellings of a rabble's brain.

Now, tell me honestly, is this an aim
Worthy a man that boasts a Briton's name ?
Would that there yet remained within thy heart
One drop of tell-tale blood, I'd bid it start
Quick from its cell, and with its crimson speak,
Of lingering virtue on thy burning cheek ;
But well I know thy blushing day's gone by,
And that the fount of shame hath long been dry.

Yet though this low ambition rule thy breast,
The passion hath not swallowed all the rest:
In worldly wisdom, too, we own thee wise,
And gold that charms for thine as other eyes.
Thou and thy brother placemen are the foes,
The reckless men that dare to interpose,
With all their chican'ry and all their might,
Between the Sovereign and a people's right:
With jealous care around the Queen ye stand,
And mark each movement of her eye and hand;
And every boon, by royal love designed
A general blessing, to the State's confined:
Quick as the cricketer arrests the ball,
Ye watch each gift and catch it ere it fall;
Then blow some empty bubble of your own,
And cheat alike the people and the throne.

Yet is thy place aught but a place of ease,
For e'en thy friends thou striv'st in vain to please;
Of these, as of thy foes, thou stand'st in awe,
Hume's frown perplexes, and Dan's word is law:
Oft sorely puzzled what to do or say,
Sense flies thy brain, and mists obscure thy way—
Afraid to stop—more fearful to proceed—
Thy wits forsake thee in thy greatest need:
Now making motions ever out of season;
And now withdrawing with as little reason:

Now diving deep in ministerial bags,
With shreds of whiggish wisdom filled, for rags
Wherewith to mend some piece of patchwork law,
Past all repair, and never worth a straw ;
Till, o'er a sea of nonsense driven on,
Like ship dismasted, and with rudder gone,
The moment comes when all thy senses reel,
Stunn'd by the thrilling, dreaded voice of Peel ;
And, downwards sinking, all thy stammerings close
'Neath the loud laughter of malicious foes.

VII.

Hark ! -o'er the din of war and ocean's roar,
A voice comes breaking from a corpse-strewn shore ;
Where, Palmerston ! thy mangled victims lie,
Graveless to rot beneath a foreign sky ;
Thou know'st it rises from the fields of Spain—
The voice of blood that shall not call in vain :
The time shall come when o'er thy trembling soul,
That voice shall bid the waves of horror roll ;
Shall fall like molten lead within thine ear,
And thou be doomed eternally to hear.
Look on the plundered wretches, that thine eye
May see maimed, starving, daily pass thee by ;

Brave men, who never fled or knew retreat
Till Evans gave the signal to retreat ;
(He of Ernani fame, and dubb'd a knight,
For deeds of legs, not arms, and speed in flight :)
Then say, vain thing of perfume, chains, and rings
(Thy years indeed might hint sublimer things),
If after gazing on such sights as these,
Thy sleep can soothe thee, or thy pleasure please :
Peace may be thine awhile, but soon or late,
Thy sin, like his, shall meet Iscariot's fate.

VIII.

When Freedom's sons choose for their rulers, knaves—
These they make tyrants, and themselves but slaves :
At once they feel their chains, and mourn their fate,
And curse their folly, and repent too late.
What else can follow ? 'tis the curse of fools
Power to abuse, as children sharp-edged tools ;
Wielding the weapons to their own undoing,
As all involving in a general ruin.
Be sure this maxim is as true as trite,
That mobs ne'er use a privilege aright.

Beneath the care of Brougham and of Wyse,
Who boast their wonders, and new schemes devise ;

And scatter far and wide Instruction's seed,
Till all the land is overgrown with weed.
Bears may be taught to dance, and pigs to spell,
And e'en as ministers to speak as well ;
The monkey tribe with well-bred airs to eat,
And chatter grace before they touch their meat :
Nay, four-legged asses shall, when eunuchs made,
Like those of two, take up the singing trade ;
And Fashion run, as ne'er it ran before,
To hear, and patronise, and shout "encore."
This may these Education-mongers do,
And treat the world with something even new ;
Nor e'er desist, till every beast is able
To do, in fact, what once it did in fable ;
And, in due time, their pupils shall be fit
To vote for members, or themselves to sit.
But with a mob to argue, and a fool,
Is worse than reasoning with a three-legged stool :
Bray them in mortars,—treat them as you will,—
One is a mob,—a fool the other still.

Ask you for proofs that thus the mob will err,
Abuse their trust, and wrong to right prefer ?
Look in yon hall—behold the damning facts—
Lo ! there the tyrants and their hundred acts
In council met, and busy pounding lies,
The dust they fling into the people's eyes ;

Whom having blinded, round their necks with ease
They wind their chains, and rivet as they please.
Then, if not sickened at the sight of knaves,
Turn and behold their victims and their slaves.

Lo ! where they pass in long and black review,
A drunken, filthy, ragg'd, and wretched crew ;
Blaspheming all,—unshorn, and shirtless most,
Though some there be who dirty linen boast :
So felon-like, you'd swear all these were men
That had been hung and brought to life again.
And these are they that rend their ruffian throats
To praise your Melbournes, Leaders, Shiels, and Grotes ;
Who by the help of cudgel-law prevail,
And add new rattles to O'Connell's tail :
And these are they that crafty placemen mean
Whene'er they name "The People" to the Queen.

VIII.

Lo ! where yon new raised piles their walls expand,
And throw their giant shadows o'er the land !
Go, and those scenes of wretchedness behold,
Their grated chambers to thine eye unfold ;
Look on the starving victims, doomed to dwell
Within each gloomy, miserable cell,

Where every sacred tie ordained by heaven
Is scorned, and outraged, and asunder riven :
Thick walls the husband from the wife divide,
The child is severed from its parent's side ;
All left a prey to want, neglect, and woe,
And all the ills that poverty can know :
Worn with despair, and wasted by disease,
Their trembling hands have barely strength to seize
The stinted, nauseous, and unwholesome fare
The "Board" assigns, and cruel hags prepare ;
Till on the bed of pain the wretches lie,
To groan unheeded and unpitied die ;
Then into hasty graves in secret thrown,
None by to weep of all they call their own.
The grass may wave long o'er the husband's tomb,
Ere yet his lonely widow learn his doom —
Some chance reveals it, and the sudden blow
A few weeks earlier lays the mourner low.
In mutual ignorance of each other's state,
Friends, parents, children, own a kindred fate ;
Hope flies them all, and welcome is the hour
That frees them from the iron hand of power.

Such is their lot, whom age and want compel
Within those hateful "Union" walls to dwell ;

The threshold passed, to certain doom they go,
As those who cross the fatal bridge of woe.
Could aught but hell devise such heartless plan
For man to execute on fellow-man?
No! *blessings* such as these could flow from none
But those the Devil had tutored for his own.

Marriage, we know, in high life, is a thing
Requiring lawyers more than priest and ring;
As Interest bids, they cut the parchment bands
That join at once the couple's hands and lands;
Love rarely smiles upon the nuptial rite,
And lends no charm to bless the wedding night.
No wonder such think lightly of the tether
That binds for life the man and wife together;
To such as these who ever will be prone
To judge of others' feelings by their own,
It seems no hardship, or by fraud or force,
A poor and aged couple to divorce;
But would these sons of pride, who sit and shine
And sumptuously at royal table dine,
Think that law righteous, or that mistress just,
That should condemn them to a stinking crust
And sour gruel, unfit for man or beast,
A mess on which nought but vile worms could feast!

And far, far worse than servants dare consign
To trough a kennel for their hounds or swine.

IX.

Back to that town which Folly calls her own,
And rules with Potter jointly on one throne;
Potter, that shines as MANCHESTER's first mayor !
And pours his blunders from the civic chair :
That town, far-famed for factories, smoke, and rags,
For purse-proud blockheads and for cotton bags :
Where, like the mud that down their Irwell wends,
Their plebeian blood from sire to son descends—
A dull, dark stream, on which nor Genius throws,
Nor Sense, one ray to brighten as it flows ;
But on it creeps, a flagging, thickening tide,
Through breasts surcharged with ignorance and pride,
And slow meandering through each bloated vein,
Chills the whole soul and stagnates round the brain.
Back to this town with breathless speed repair,
As though the hindmost were the devil's share,
With shame o'erwhelmed, the *delegated* throng !
Mark, how they pant and scour the roads along,
Like beaten hounds that to their kennel run,
Writhing with pain, the dreaded lash to shun.

Swift as the wind, lo ! Cobden leads the van,
That English-murdering, pamphlet-mongering man,
Who, lured to town by visions of renown,
Came posting up to—post far quicker down ;
Whilst in the rear, of *Greggs* and *Smiths*, a crew
As late his rules, his footsteps now pursue.
Fear conjures up a thousand phantoms grim,
And Peels and *Corn Laws* round their senses swim ;
Some foul fiend's gripe each flying champion feels,
And Scorn, loud hissing, follows at his heels.

But who is he, with rueful length of face,
That now gains ground, and sure will win the race ?
George William W—d ! the luckless and disgraced !
Now from the *Chamber's* highest seat displaced !
Whose skull's interior walls are plastered o'er,
Unfurnished else, with bits of pilfered lore ;
Small shreds of argument on this and that,
Newspaper parings,—and the Lord knows what,—
That seem but hoarded with industrious pains
To prove the want of taste, and lack of brains.

Unhappy George ! how couldst thou tempt thy fate ?—
Is Folly's love not better than her hate ?
With thy poor stock of wit, thy small pretence
To wisdom, learning, eloquence, or sense ;

How could'st thou hope in Senate-hall to meet
With aught but mockery, laughter, and defeat !

“ Chamber of Commerce ! ! ” take the pen and
write

“ Chamber of Asses,” and the title’s right :
For have ye not been proved, by Cocker’s rules
And your own delegates, a pack of fools ?
Because ye rule at home with iron hand,
Thought ye to carry terror through the land ?
Thought ye, that clamour, threats, and insolence
Would aught avail with men of worth and sense ?
No ; these have brought, as such presumption should,
Disgrace on all, as on your chairman Wood.
Clapped and encouraged by a factious few,
You needs must think the world would laud ye too :
Like some vain hero, whom no friends can warn,
Fired with the applauses of a country barn,
Is all ambitious for a wider field,
And prove the fame that London boards can yield ;
Thinks himself born the wonder of the age,
Appears,—is hissed, and pelted off the stage !
Then learn a useful lesson from the past,
And be this sad discomfiture your last.
Let hope of fame tempt you no more to roam,
But be content to play the fool at home ;

Talk of your *jennies*, and descent on *mules*,
Leave laws to statesmen—logic to the schools :
To Corn Law questions never more pretend,
Lest the *flail's* wrath upon your heads descend,
Which, though it wrought amendment in you all,
The *profit* to the thresher would be small ;
For Heaven can tell how few would be the *grains*
That would reward the labourer for his pains.
Enough for you, through your own streets to range,
Look grave, talk big, and act the knave on 'Change :
Still be it yours in vulgar state to dine,
And praise your *Poulett* as you praise your wine ;
Still let the father hob-nob with the son,
And toast the self-elected Brotherton ;
Live on, in low-bred and unlettered ease,
Till dotage come by slow but sure degrees ;
And when from hence called to your final doom,
This simple record shall adorn your tomb :
“ Here shrined in *chaff*, lie snugly side by side,
The men who raved of Corn Laws, and who—died.”

And now, Mancestrians, old and young, adieu !
I sang of SALFORD, and I've sung of you ;
Ye find, good friends, though long the time hath
seemed,
The Muse her promise hath at last redeemed.

Yet there are men, on whom the Muse in vain
Would strive to fix a stigma or a stain ;
Men, whom this town may justly boast and prize,
Whose worth all malice and all art defies :
With minds enriched with manly sense and thought,
By taste refined, with varied knowledge fraught :—
Who, prizing honour, scorn the arts of those
Whose shameless deeds proclaim them honour's foes ;—
With hearts, where Virtue's noblest fervour glows,
And hands, that minister as feeling flows.
Yes, such there are to whom this praise is due,
Friends to their kind, and to their country too.
GARNETT, stand forth ! does not thy conscious breast
Feel, and this truth with honest pride attest ?
Not honoured more and prized in private life,
Than fitted to engage in public strife ;—
The time will shortly come when thou must stand
Amidst the chosen guardians of the land ;
Be ready at the call to lend thy aid,
And join the band in Freedom's cause arrayed.

X.

“ Each to his fancy, as the parson said,”—
The vulgar adage most have heard or read :

Some favourite object all mankind pursue :
Then why not Sovereigns have their hobby too.

Lo ! where Van Amburgh and his monsters all,
Shake Drury's walls at Folly's sacred call ;
And all the wonders of the feasting scene
Are viewed with transport by a youthful Queen ;
Who, tired of watching Melbourne daily fed,
And minor placemen eat the palace bread :—
Sick of contending with her guardian peers,
Of Opera boxing, and of boxing *ears* :—
And wearied too with all the various joys,
Balls, plays, and shows, the gew-gaws, and the toys—
That catering ministers invent to screen
At once their deeds and to amuse their Queen ;
Now finding nought but dregs in Pleasure's cup,
She turns to *Van* to fill the chalice up.

Pleased with a scene so novel and refined,
So fitted to absorb the royal mind :
To soften manners and new grace impart,—
Exalt the soul, and to improve the heart ;—
Behind the scenes she views, night after night,
The *Lions* fed with ever new delight.
'Tis thus superior taste a charm desciries,
In thousand things that vulgar minds despise :

In dirt and gloom lie hid the diamond's blaze,
Till Art all conquering bids its lustre blaze ;
So virtue lies in nauseous drugs concealed,—
And loathsome cats can sweetest perfume yield.

Mark how the brute, thus honoured and thus blest,
In conscious triumph rears his haughty crest ;
And ere he dips his royal beard in gore,
Assumes his loudest and his newest roar—
And proudly strides, and shakes his shaggy mane,
Lashes his sides, and—loudly roars again—
With keener fires his glaring eye-balls roll,
And all the monarch fills his swelling soul ;
Now wide apart his horrid jaws he flings,
And on his prey with savage hunger springs ;
Bones, blood, and brains, in one short instant more,
Have all evanish'd, and the scene is o'er.

Then thanking *Bunn* with condescending sweet,
For thus providing such a splendid treat ;
And thanking *Amburgh*, too, that worthy man :
She vows henceforth he *shall* be called “Sir Van :”
And quick retires, to pore with curious eye
O'er this strange page of “*Natural History*.”

XI.

Turn where you will, and beat whatever grounds,
Game of all kinds for Satire's aim abounds :
Fat knaves, false courtiers, pensioned sons and cousins, . . .
Fools by the score and sycophants in dozens,
Lie in and hover round the Muse's path,
Invite her steps and tempt her certain wrath.
Gods ! what a scene th' indignant eye descries,
All bent on mischief, and yet all how wise !
Scrambling and plundering 'gainst the day of sorrow,—
Busy as pismires hoarding for the morrow.
Oh ! for the might of Dryden's muse sublime,
His soaring pinion and soul-searching rhyme,
That like a two-edged sword with deadly wound,
Fell'd where it smote, and terror spread around :—
Or Pope's keen wit, and verse like polished steel,
That made those tremble who nought else could feel :—
Or Churchill's vigorous and intrepid lay,
The scourge of all the scoundrels of his day ;
Rough, manly, strong, as knotted staff of oak,
And laid some villain prostrate at each stroke :—
Or He, the mighty master of his art,
That held dominion o'er the human heart ;

Round whom the passions thronged a faithful band,
And bowed subservient to his sovereign hand ;
Who at his bidding strung his heavenly lyre,
And wreathed its chords with never-dying fire ;
Oh ! for his verse, beneath whose blasting spell,
“ Hope withering fled, and Mercy sighed farewell.”
Bards like to these, armed with resistless rhymes,
Alone may hope to mend these monstrous times ;
So bold have public villains grown, no law
Divine or human can restrain or awe.
Yet though Vice clothe itself in stubborn mail,
Laugh at rebuke, and for a time prevail,
There’s still an inlet to the guiltiest breast,
Some part or passion weaker than the rest,
Through which the boldest may be made to smart,
And writhe transfix'd by Wit’s resistless dart ;
As he Styx-dipped fell by the fatal steel,
That winged by fate stood quivering in his heel :—
Or he of Gath, that Israel’s host defied,
Yet by a stripling smitten in his pride :—
Or like the steel-clad sons of France, that flew
Safe o’er the bloody field of Waterloo,
Till British swords, with fearful vengeance fraught,
Espied and pierced the vulnerable throat.

And have we, then, no bard of lofty name,
By Genius fired, and beloved of fame,

That dares stand boldly forth by virtue's side,
And lend his aid to stem Oppression's tide ?
To arrest Ambition in its mad career,
Flushed with success, and ruin in its rear ?
To strike Corruption in its strong, dark hold,
And Avarice brooding o'er a nation's gold ?
Revenge his Country's violated laws,
And win that high reward, her just applause :
Ere yet her ancient glories, one by one,
Are swept away and all the land undone ?

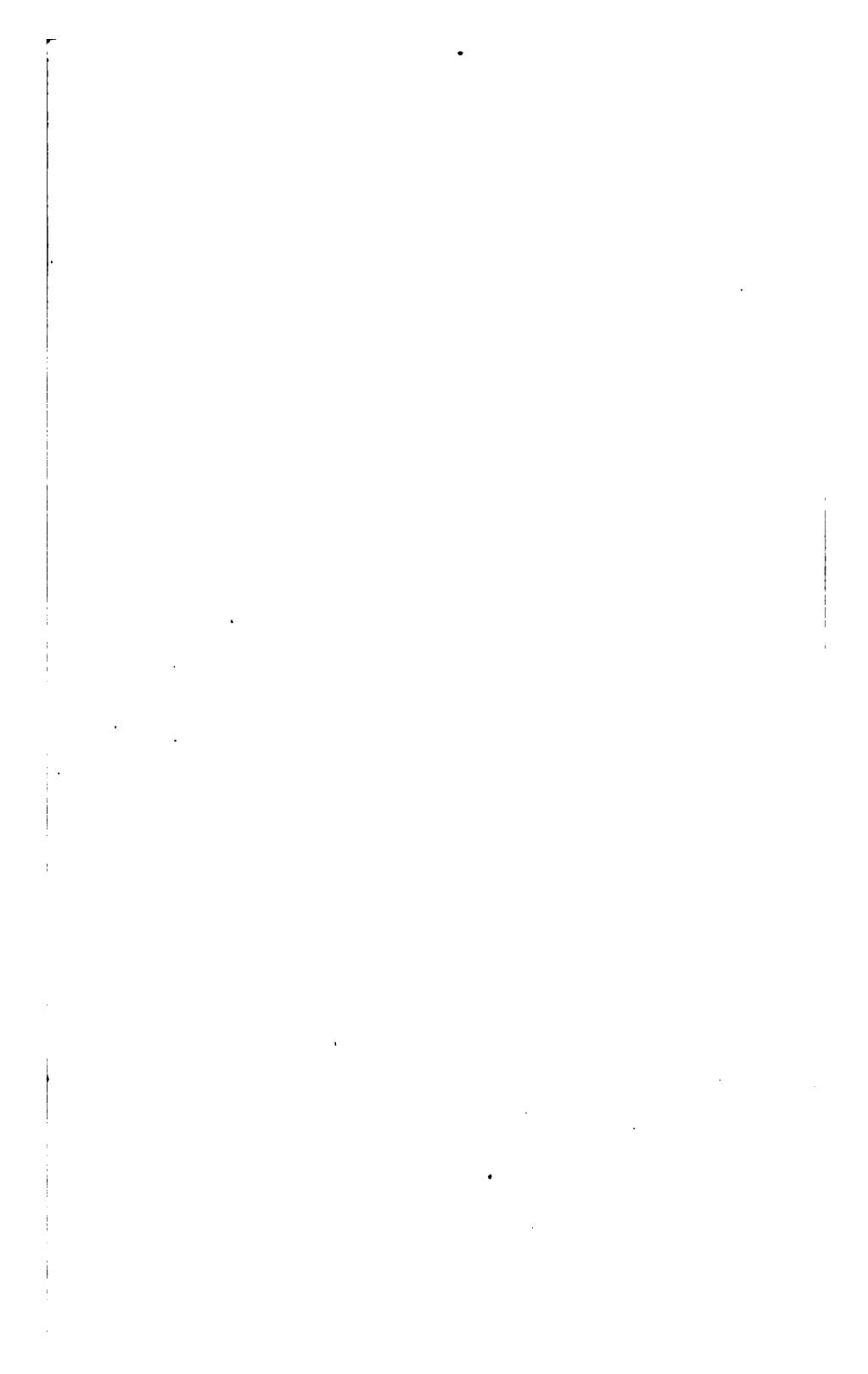
There are, indeed, whose genius well may claim,
None can deny, the proudest wreaths of fame :
To whom the world hath been indebted long,
For all the beauty and the power of song :
But most, alas ! rank with the great of yore;
Their strings are mute, their voices heard no more.
Or if one wake the slumbering chords again,
'Tis but to chaunt some idle—feeble—strain :
He strikes the lyre with a mind at ease,
That with surrounding Rain ill agrees :
Like him of Rome that fiddled as he gazed
On domes and towers that round him fiercely blazed.

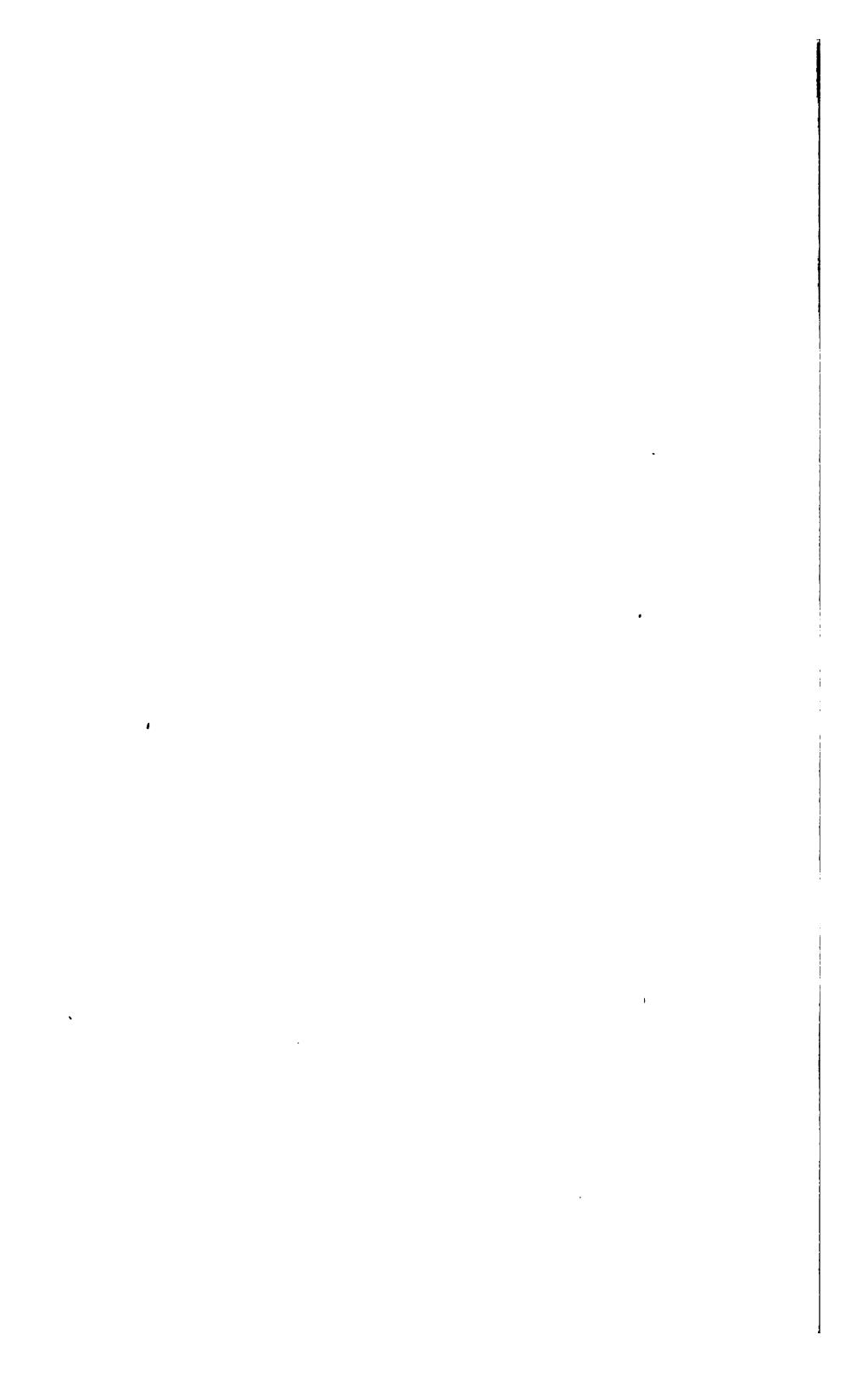
Then, Satire, rise ! in all thy power confest,
And with thyself inspire some chosen breast :

Some gifted son in virtue strong and rhyme,
Sworn foe to slavery, meanness, and to crime :
Stir him to active daring, and impart
Thy keenest shafts, and guide them to the heart :
Yet bid him still be just, for Satire's end
Is not so much to torture as to mend.

Meanwhile, let me who nothing boast but zeal,
Honest and ardent—for my country's weal ;
Pursue my just career—though small my skill,
Some luck perchance may bless my rhymings still.

Palmer and Clayton, Printers, 9, Crane-court, Fleet-street.





MEN AND MEASURES;

OR,

THE POLITICAL PANORAMA.

A Satire.

“Where is this minister? where is the band
Of ready slaves, who at his elbow stand
To hear and to perform his wicked will?

* * * *

O my poor Country!—weak and overpower'd
By thine own sons—ate to the bone—devour'd
By vipers, which, in thine own entrails bred,
Prey on thy life, and with thy blood are fed.”

CHURCHILL.

PART THE SECOND.

LONDON:

JOSEPH THOMAS, 1, FINCH LANE, CORNHILL.

1839.

Palmer & Clayton, Printers, Crane Court, Fleet Street.

CRITICAL NOTICES.

"It is a long time since we read anything more pungent than this satire, which is, moreover, distinguished by high poetical ability. The 'Political Panorama' gives us most biting portraiture of our liberal statesmen and courtly glozers, whilst the position of Britain is forcibly detailed."—*The Age*.

"Quote this book we dare not; it is the bitterest satire we ever perused," &c.—*Court Gazette*.

"The author is, undoubtedly, a clever man, has smart epithets at his fingers' ends, and writes seemingly with ease and speed."—*Court Journal*.

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"It is a clever thing—there are some brilliant ideas, and one uniformly poetic flame pervades. The harmony of the rhyme puts us in mind of Dryden's iambics."—*Parthenon*.

"There is a deal of vigorous talent in this. We can assert with truth that the author is a poet," &c.—*United Service Gazette*.

"This is a poem, although opposed to the principles of our paper, from which we cannot in justice withhold the merit of great vigour and originality of expression."—*Weekly True Sun*.

"We can safely venture to pronounce the satire before us a production indicating considerable tact and genius. The pictures are carefully drawn and true to life."—*Liverpool Standard*.

"This is a talented and powerful satire. The able writer lays on the lash with just severity," &c.—*Wooler's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*.

"A clever satire.—It is given to the world anonymously, and rests, consequently, on its intrinsic merits; which, however, are such as to command the approbation, &c. With smoothness of verse and elegance of diction, the most striking reproofs are dealt upon the political vices and public offences of the dominant faction," &c.—*Yorkshire Gazette*.

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"A most cutting, satirical poem—exhibits poetic talent, but more of that deep sarcastic satire," &c.—*Dublin Warden*.

"There is much force and truth in this satire, so much, that we should like it to be very generally read. His lines are bold and nervous, and an honesty of purpose is evident throughout the whole poem."—*Birmingham Advertiser*.

See also the *Atlas*—*Argus*—*Bell's New Messenger*, &c. &c. &c.

MEN AND MEASURES;

OR,

THE POLITICAL PANORAMA.

PART SECOND.

I.

THANKS, Censors all ! Thus far my spotless page
Hath 'scaped the withering blasts of critic rage.
'Tis soon, I grant, of favouring gales to boast,
When scarcely launched, or but afloat at most :
Though winds of promise fill th' adventurous sail,
The morning breeze, ere eventide, may fail :—
The storm may soon in all its fury burst,
And, though not *damned*, my rhymes may yet be cursed ;
For he, whose verse would knaves and fools expose,
Will surely find no scarcity of foes ;
And in proportion as the truth abounds,
Their wrath is kindled, and the couplet wounds :

'Tis this alone annoys the rascal more
Than scarlet rags inflame the bull or whore :
'Twixt good and bad this difference we descry,
These shrink from truth, those only fear a lie.
Well, come what may—whate'er my *future* path,
Enough, my present bears no trace of wrath :
Then why not grateful prove, and still thank
heaven,
Though ill's in store, for good already given ?

The *Tories* all approve my lay, of course—
Its truth—its fire—pungency—and force ;
Yet e'en the Whigs and Radicals combine
To praise the nervous vigour of my line :
Some say each page poetic flame can show ;
And some commend the rhyme's harmonious flow :
Some grant my verse hath spirit—freedom—ease—
But that there's rather too much gall to please.
Thus friends and foes accord the wreath of fame,
And but one single voice denies the claim :
'Tis the *ex-chief*, that through his '*Weekly*' cries
“ 'Tis nought but trash, malevolence, and lies.”
He reads my page, and views, reflected there,
His haughty lordship pictured to a hair ;
The likeness feels ; yet, feigning not to see,
Fumes, and denies his own identity.

Something, indeed, was said of “ scarcely right
To mention hell to modern ears polite.”

Ay ! 'twas in Eden's bower, on Adam's bride,
That first this trick of tickling ears was tried :
In courtly phrase, the subtle foe refined,
Whilst Eve lay listening, on the turf reclined :
With what success he plied his art, appears
From Guilt's dark record, and from Misery's tears :
The crafty master knew his trade too well,
When tempting woman, e'er to speak of hell.

With equal zeal, and with consummate skill,
The sons pursue the father's system still.
To hide, and to pervert, Deception flings
Its specious veil alike o'er men and things :
We try each trick, and practise every art,
To blind the judgment and corrupt the heart.
We keep refining, with such rage and haste,
Our morals, manners, politics, and taste ;
Until with bleeding, and with purging teased,
They all alike are sickly and diseased.
Our nerves are now so delicate—so fine—
A breath annoys them like the spider's line :
The heart, with feeling thinly coated o'er,
Is fair outside, but rotten at the core :

Whilst like a worn out door-plate, rubbed each
day,
Our virtue's fairly polished all away.

When will this farce of affectation end ?
This false refinement, yet how far extend ?
Our actions prove, and prove it to our shame,
We loathe not sin, but only hate the name.
Let sovereign fashion once adopt some vice,
Its hideous features vanish in a trice ;
Dipped in her font, and re-baptized, the sin,
However vile and loathsome it went in,
Comes forth a cherub; and the smiling guest
By all is welcomed, and by all caressed.
We know not now those horrid words of yore—
Adulterer—whore—now shock our ears no more ;
A milder term, a softer name, “ is given
To those who play their tricks before high heaven.”
Those titles old have long been flung aside,
Like clothes in which some leprous wretch hath died;
As though these only were the hateful things
To which the curse belongs—th’ infection clings.
And thus we think to thwart the great design,
And cheat the vengeance of the power divine ;
Like those who fly the battle-field by night,
Yet leave their tents to meet the morning light,

'Gainst which the foe may pour its hottest fire,
Whilst they themselves, unharmed, unseen, retire.
How far this wit, that serves our purpose here,
Avails above, hereafter will appear.

II.

But what strange cause of grief—what sudden blow—
Hath Britain's daughters plunged in deepest woe ?
Why do their fettered tongues refuse to speak ?
And whence these burning blushes on the cheek ?
Have they been mocked, too ? must the land run o'er,
The land, with misery that was full before ?
Yes, outrage foul and barbarous hath been done,
And every woman made to bleed through one.

'Tis not that Slander's base and blistering tongue
Hath dared to work a high-born maiden wrong ;
Though this indeed might claim a tear from all
Whose hearts can throb at suffering Virtue's call :
But 'tis that Woman, and her rights, and cause,
Her dearest feelings, and those sacred laws
In which she puts her trust—like some weak thing
That flies for refuge 'neath an angel's wing—

Have all been trampled, at the stern behest
Of those who should have known and prized them
best :

'Tis that the babbling tongue of vulgar fame
To every shore will bear this tale of shame ;
And to licentious ears, bold lips reveal
What virgin modesty would fain conceal.
These are the thoughts that bid the crimson rise,
And call the tears to Beauty's pensive eyes.

And where wert thou, maid of the braided brow ?
Once Britain's hope—Victoria, where wert thou !
When, at the very footsteps of thy throne,
This cruel wrong, this shameful deed, was done ?
If in this day, and here, on British ground,
There could a wretch so truly base be found,
So loathed of Honour, and so cursed of Heaven,
To whom man's form, without his heart, was given ;
A form of seeming, but that hides within
A tainted soul, bespotted o'er with sin ;
Whose breath was poison, and whose only joy —
To mock, deform, to torture, and destroy
All that is bright—all that the good revere—
All that is prized above, and honoured here :
If such there be—and such there is, too well
Th' indignant land, mocked and oppressed, can tell —

Who, high in power, dared thus abuse his trust,
And spurn the victim prostrate in the dust :
Could not thy arm—Victoria's sceptred arm—
Shield thy own sex from insult and from harm?
Couldst thou forget what to that sex was due,
What to thyself, and what to England, too ?
Know'st thou the lesson taught by him of yore,
Who spake as man had never spoke before ?
How that, when one, o'erwhelmed with guilt and shame,
For judgment brought, before him trembling came,
Knowing her base accusers' hearts were fraught
With treacherous wiles, and every evil thought,
He bade the man whose bosom knew no guile
Fling the first stone at her who wept the while—
Quick conscience seized upon the guilty breast,
And to himself each sinner stood confessed.
Here, mercy, wisdom, justice, brightly shone !
And must these attributes be Heaven's alone ?
If guilt were spared that knew of no defence,
Then how shouldst thou have dealt with *innocence* ?
Had this example in thine heart been shrined,
And breathed its still small voice upon thy mind,
Thou hadst thyself been spared some vain regret,
And Hastings' heart had been unstricken yet ;
Thou hadst been taught, too, whom of all below
It most concerns the Sovereign's self to know :

How to rebuke th' insidious tongues, whose zeal
Can wound more deeply than the sharpest steel,—
Tongues, dipped in malice and on mischief bent,
That carry others' falsehoods, and invent,—
That slander make at once their trade and sport:
Found everywhere, but prospering most at Court.

For you, the authors of this foul disgrace,
Ye live a scandal on the human race :
The burning ploughshares of a barbarous age
Yield to the tortures of more polished rage :
Your darker malice, and superior skill,
Devise a fiercer—deadlier ordeal still ;
The first, the body might alone control,
But your inventions pierce the inmost soul ;
And, just as Envy points her shrivelled hand,
The victim's chosen, and your minions brand.
Soon must those hearts which pity never felt,
Nor virtue warmed, nor woman's tears can melt,
Be withered with a flame, whose restless rage
No time shall soften, and no art assuage :
Your prayers for mercy, Mercy shall despise,
And hurl them back in vengeance from the skies ;
And whilst your names, chained to the wings of
Scorn,
Swift round the hissing, hooting world are borne,

The festering load shall gain new bonds from time,
And gather infamy from every clime ;
And the rude savage, as he paints his skin,
Shall thank his gods ye are not of his kin.

And thou, Sir Knight, the ruffian tool of power,
Full oft already hast thou cursed the hour
Thy ready tongue and dirty hands were lent
To bear and execute the foul intent ;
Stripped now thyself of pension and of place,
Where wilt thou fly to hide thy guilty face ?
Stripped, did I say ?—Heavens ! since I wrote the word,
The filthy knave of all work's been preferred !
Snatched from disgrace, just as the hounds of hate
Had been unleashed to hunt him to his fate,—
Snatched by the royal arm in haste away,
And Justice baffled of her rightful prey ;
To stand in triumph by his Sovereign's side,
With more than former insolence and pride—
It cannot be—the Queen could never dare
To raise him thus, though Mercy bade her spare !
'Tis strange, but true,—lo ! where the varlet stands
Amidst her train, and waiting for commands.
There let him stand—on life's low dunghill laid,
He might have stunk and rotted in the shade ;

But thus exalted, like an evil star,
His guilty name shall fling its rays afar.
Yes, let him glare, loathed and despised of all,
Fate but reserves him for a greater fall.
But was it wise such dangerous step to take,
And shield the guilty for the daring's sake ?
No—'tis not dignified, nor is it just,
That thus the Royal Person should be thrust
'Twixt every wretch denounced of man and God,
And the raised arm that would inflict the rod.
It must not, *shall not*, be—nor shall the throne
Be made a sanctuary for knaves alone.

There, too, let ——— and ——— shine,
And, stirred by malice, hatch some new design.
If aught like modesty at Court remain,
Their wits will soon be spinning lies again ;
For sight of Virtue wakes their hearts to strife,
As the Sun's rays fill fly-blown flesh with life.
From Cain's dark guilty brow, nor art, nor time,
Might chase the burning token of his crime ;
So from these names, no labour can efface
The deeply-graven record of disgrace.
The task were hopeless—and as hopeless quite
To make them blacker, as to wash them white :

But since this pair are to their Queen so dear,
Still let them void their venom in her ear;
If England's Sovereign England's welfare deem,
When weighed with such as these, a worthless dream,
And with the crown itself would rather part
Than banish these from place and from her heart,
Still let the spies and all the serpent brood
Enjoy her smiles, and hiss at all that's good;—
Still let them thrive, and shed their poisonous breath,
'Till all be moral barrenness and death:
Whilst such are sentinels, but few I ween
Will dare come near St. James's or the Queen.
Yes, let them hang their midnight cauldron o'er,
And put to shame the broom-stick race of yore,
With arts infernal, subtle mischief brew,
From Envy's slaver, and from Falsehood's dew;
Then, in due time, with stealthy feet repair
To wake their mistress to her morning fare;
Spread o'er her youthful mind the unctuous mess,
And strive to poison, whilst they help to dress:—
From room to room, still let them noiseless glide,
Now here—now there—now at their Sovereign's side—
Explore each closet—crevice—keyhole—screen—
And, licensed, range in search of the obscene,
Which though they seek in vain, such is their skill,
Their prurient wits can paint it as they will.

Each quickly fashions what she fails to find,
And dips the brushes in her own dark mind.
With jaundiced eyes o'er beauty's form they range,
And guilt and shame descry in every change:
If health depart from virtue's cheek awhile,
Mark their quick glances and malignant smile:
If but the zone one tittle be displaced,
They hasten to report the thickening waist—
Talk of the short'ning robe—the bust—the pins—
And magnify the nothing into twins..

Enough of these—their characters are such,
Themselves must own I have not wronged them much.
And let them still in place and favour rise,
Truth, soon or late, will ope the Sovereign's eyes:
Nor need their victim, or their bitterest foe,
Wish that their bosoms keener pangs might know:
The guilty heart, of envious thoughts possessed,
Distils its own rank venom in the breast;
Remorse usurps it, though its end it gain,
And keener anguish, if it toil in vain.

And you, ye clamorous fools, that fight and bawl
For that blood-thirsty thing, ye Freedom call!
As much like her who owns the name, as he,
Mankind's great foe, himself in chains, is free..

What think ye of your Gods—burst the last tie
That for a time restrained them,—Decency?
All else laid waste, they turn their desperate strife
Against the sanctities of social life:—
And now with nought to bind them or to awe—
Conscience contemned, and broken every law—
Each right despised, and every cause betrayed,
That public men *could* barter or invade:—
Behold them stand, unmasked, supremely cursed,
Prepared for havoc and to dare the worst!
Are not these fruits of freedom to your mind?
Is the charm broke—or will ye still be blind?
Sleep on awhile—’twill not be long before
Your dream of freedom and of folly’s o’er.

And, should there be who toils in humble life,
Far from the Court—its intrigues, and its strife,
One man who deems the spoiler ne’er shall come
To mar his peace and violate his home :
Who hears the muttering of the storm afar,
Nor heeds the rumbling of Ambition’s car;
But, with a tranquil breast, looks up to gaze
On towering guilt, and those unhallowed rays
That dwell round reckless power enthroned in state,
Let him beware and dread the bondsman’s fate.

Though *Etna's* height, far blazing in the sky,
No terror flings upon the peasant's eye,
Who dwells remote deep in the vale below,
Nor dreams of danger and of coming woe:
Around its base he views all nature smile,
But in its womb the ruin works the while,
'Till comes the hour when down the mountain's side
Th' unfettered lava rolls its fiery tide,
And, onwards sweeping with resistless force,
O'erleaps all bounds that would oppose its course;
Then pours its burning flood full o'er the plain,
And homes engulfs that ne'er may smile again.

III.

Methinks the palace floors, for Virtue's feet
Will grow too hot, and force her to retreat:
Such pestilential air the place pervades,
We soon shall find nor *honour* there nor *maids*—
For all who value an unsullied name
Must fly its precincts, or through fear or shame.
Where Slander thrives and rears its serpent crest,
And Vice, exalted, boasts its glittering vest,
Truth, Worth, and Modesty, despised, repair
To seek a kindlier spot, and purer air.

So in that valley, where the Upas grows,
No verdure brightens, and no flow'ret blows.

And if our Sovereign still possess the pride
To see, at least, *some virtue* by her side,
The only plan will be to advertise
For country ladies that may wish to rise :
My Lord, an adept in th' inveigling art,
Will lend his aid, and cunning words impart :
With various bait his teeming head is fraught,
And he best knows how damsels may be caught.
Th' advice of such an *one*, indeed, might do,
But to make sure, 'twere better to have *two* :
And where so much on *promises* depends,
Why Palmerston's your very best of friends :
'Tis his sole business, through the live-long week,
To manufacture these things, and to break :
'Tis true, their dupes of late have all been males,
But as they deal with **HEADS**, they'll deal with tails.
If with the help of these, no maidens come,
Then send the *Baroness*, with fife and drum,
Hoist the cockade, beat all the country round,
And tempt recruits, with bounty and with sound :
Should she, so crafty, meet with no success,
There's no alternative but to *impress*.

Nor deem the censures of the Muse too strong,
Or that there's aught of malice in my song :
Think you the conscious surgeon acts from strife,
Who lops a limb to save the patient's life ?
Whatever ill or ailment we endure,
The pill must needs be bitter that would cure ;
And easier 'tis sometimes to die, than live
And take the dose which *Court Physicians* give.
Though these, I grant, are too much given to please,
When duty bids them combat with disease.

Much, too, they err, who deem that evil small,
Which from the few would soon extend to all.
We look on those placed at the helm of state,
And safely thence infer a nation's fate ;
As Wisdom dictates, or Self-interest sways,
Its power increases, or its strength decays ;
Nor less a people's morals may be known
As Vice or Virtue prospers round the throne.
The Court is like a mirror, hung on high,
Which rival thousands view with watchful eye,
And mould their manners and their lives thereby.
Precept, indeed, may teach us how to talk,
But good example lures aright to walk :
The one is like the chart, whereon is traced
The seaman's track along the watery waste ;

But oft, too oft, on sunken rocks or sands,
Despite his skill, the vessel strikes or strands:
The other, like the beacon's blaze by night,
Shines with a steady and unerring light;
We fix our eyes upon its friendly ray,
And shun the dangers that would else betray:
'Tis seen from far, and o'er life's treacherous tides,
Safe into port with faithful beam it guides.

But turn from this, and bid farewell awhile
To Court "exposures," and to female guile;
There are who *will* be heard, that now combine,
Sons and allies of Hastings' honoured line,
To seek atonement at the Sovereign's hands,
And the loud nation backs their just demands.
The land is roused—one universal cry
Of virtuous indignation rings on high.

IV.

There have, no doubt, in many an age and clime,
Been public knaves as deeply stained with crime:—
There have been ministers as false and bold,
And men as covetous of power and gold;—

As those our sons shall curse, with honest rage,
When truth hath penned the history of this age,
And linked their names in many a burning line,
For aye to infamy, and *thirty-nine*:

We see great villains rise from time to time,
Made by the force of intellect, sublime;
That thirst for rule, and climbing, hour by hour,
By mind and daring, win the heights of power;
And whilst their deeds, fear, hate, and awe inspire,
Yet own some traits the world can still admire:

But ne'er before were tyrant leaders seen
At once so base, so little, and so mean;
Such love of sway, and impotence of mind,
Such shameless hearts, and shallow wits combined:
Their characters made up of fool and knave,
And the worst features of the crawling slave:—
From all that's nobly bad, as good, exempt,
They share, by turns, our hatred and contempt;
And ne'er before did men so weak as they,
The throne endanger, or the land betray;
Nor shew less skill when trampling on the laws,
To make the worse appear the better cause.
It were as though, to puzzle all mankind,
Fate had some trick in jest, or spleen designed,
That all posterity might wonder why
Such men as these were ever placed so high.

With just such knowledge of their mother tongue,
As gives them power to do it grievous wrong;
And just that happy share of eloquence,
As serves to prove their utter want of sense;
They argue, legislate, and blunder on,
From great Lord Melbourne down to Little John:
And though the house, contemptuous, nightly smile,
Small care have they for logic, or for style:
Inveterate still, they plunge through thick and thin,
Nor heed derision out of doors or in;
For this their motto, "let those laugh that win."
Talk not of virtue, eloquence, and sense,
They value these less than so many pence:
Where are your men of worth and talent? out—
Then say no more they know what they're about.

No sound can move them, save an Irish howl,
And this alarms and vibrates through the soul;
They own no master but that foul-mouth'd son
Of the great scarlet whore of Babylon
Themselves upraised to ignominious fame,
Few, else, had heard his blasphemy or name—
The man that raves in schoolboy phrase, and writes,
And sings, by turns, his treason, and recites
With "beast" on all his features; and with soul
More vile and hideous, and ten times more foul.

Yet such can drive these Ministers at will,
And make them all his slightest wish fulfil.
Oh shame ! to cringe to such a wretch as this !
To feel his rod, and then be made to kiss :
And, at his bidding, lowly kneel, and lick
The foot that just hath been upraised to kick !
Can human degradation farther go ?
Who would have thought that men could stoop so
low ?

Look on your palms, ye faithless, reckless tribe,
Befouled with many a dirty deed and bribe :
For there the tempter's blackening paw of flame,
Hath left its sign and finger-marks of shame !
Impressed what time the Papist's hand ye grasped,
Whilst heaven and earth gazed, wond'ring, as ye clasped,
And sold your country and your hopes on high,
All that *O'Connell* and the *Devil* could buy.
It matters not which name you place the first,
For who shall dare to say which is the worst.
Worse is the word I know, but 'twould not chime,
And grammar here, perforce, must yield to rhyme.

When first these men (O what an evil hour
For Britain's weal !) assumed the reins of power,
Peace and content through all the kingdom reigned,
Toil was rewarded, and the laws maintained :

Whilst Commerce brought her wealth from every strand,

And viewed at home her crowded marts expand :

Then, England shone earth's arbitress confessed,

The wise—the bold—pre-eminently blessed :

And every man that owned a Briton's name

Dared boast the title, and was rich in fame.

How is it now ? On Albion look and say,

Where is the grandeur of her happier day.

Proofs of misrule abound on every side,

Of guilt and folly, treachery and pride :

They haunt our steps—on every sense they press—

All, all is discord, murmuring, and distress :

We close our eyes upon a nation's tears—

The people's curses thunder in our ears !

Where'er we look—where'er we take our stand,

The tyrant hoofs have dinted all the land ;

The signs are rife within each gloomy home,

We cannot shun them if abroad we roam :

We seek the ocean, once our own, in vain,

Insult awaits—yes, 'waits us on the main :

And hastening on we try some foreign shore

To find, alas ! our day of greatness o'er:

Its sons revile us, and the very sod

Now mocks the foot that once in triumph trod.

Yes, England stands the laughing-stock of all,
Of every nation, whether great or small :
They smite her on one cheek,—she turns the other,
And meekly asks them to salute its brother.
France heaps contumely on that flag, which erst
Her fleets, like wildfowl, o'er the waves dispersed ;
And then explains, but with that sneering face
Which adds to insult, and augments disgrace ;
Whilst in his frozen clime, the crafty Czar,
O'er schemes of plunder brooding, and on war,
Hurls with impunity his scorn from far.
Where are our "*wooden walls*," renowned so long ?
They live, indeed—but only live in song.
Oh ! that some bard, in patriotic strains,
Would raise his voice, and sing our wooden brains,
And tell, how that the "*oak*" had upwards fled
From British hearts, and centred in the head.

But lo ! Rebellion on the midnight heath,
Marshals her thousands for the work of death :
Rapine and Murder, thirsting for their prey,
Crouch at her feet, and wait the word "*away!*"
The gathering bands around her standard haste,
Halt, form, deploy, and deepen o'er the waste.
The steel is glittering 'neath the cold, pale moon,
But blood shall flow and dim its lustre soon :

E'en now they quit their gloomy haunts, and dare
To hoist their banners in the day's broad glare.
Blood ! blood ! the watchword — and that trickling
gore
Proclaims their swords but only thirst for more.
Can now the guardians of the land and law
That roused these bands to desperation, awe ?
They've played with fire till all the land's in flame—
Can the same hands that woke its fury, tame ?
They've raised a host of fiends—know they a spell
Can send the legion back again to hell ?

Turn to that land of everlasting strife—
To Ireland turn, with priests and murders rife—
Ill fated isle ! though "*green*" adorn thy name,
"*Red*" had much better imaged forth thy fame :
For every stream that journeys to thy strand,
In crimson foam 's flung back upon the land,
As though the waters of the deep disdained
All union with a tide so darkly stained.
Cursed is thy shore, most cursed of all the earth,
The spot foredoomed to give O'Connell birth.
Much hast thou suffered from misrule of late;
But for the darker features of thy fate
Thank *him*, the worst, the deadliest of thy foes,
That nurse thy crimes and fatten on thy woes :

Thank him, the vilest of a monstrous brood
That call thee mother, but have sucked thy blood
With vampyre lips, until within thy veins
Nought but unleavened misery remains :
He speaks thee fair, but all his soul is strife,
And what is death to thee, to him is life.
Oh ! why—when Peace, as ministers declare,
With outspread wings, was hovering in mid-air,
Called down from heaven by Normanby, to throw
Her blessings round, and heal thy every woe :
When all thy prison doors were open flung,
And felons freed 'twere mercy to have hung :
When Law itself was handcuffed to a priest,
And loosed on none that bowed them to "The Beast;"
When Truth was silenced, and when Justice quailed,
And force and Papistry o'er all prevailed :
When crime-returns were spotless as the snow,
And ropes, and irons, only used for show ;
And gaolers all had nought to do but cry,
Long live O'Connell and Lord Normanby !—
Why did the Marquis from thy shores retreat,
Give up his honours and vice-regal seat,
And leave the work, so zealously begun,
To be completed by an Ebrington ?
Why stayed he not to help Rome's bigot band,
To rout the Protestants from out the land,

To burn and slay, until their hated blood
O'erflowed the Isle, and thickened into mud ;
And not one heretic remained to tell
Where stood his church, or how in heaps it fell ?
'Twas surely something e'en to seem to rule,
Although he figured as a dirty tool.
But wherefore ask ? we need not wonder why
The man, at last, grew weary of his sty ;
Whate'er his kinsfolk, or the world may say,
He dearly earned his marquisate and pay :
For since the Melbourne law, that none should claim
Title, or office, but those known to shame,
Or, who would swear to do such deeds alone,
As Vice itself, yes, Vice should blush to own ;
We need not ask what now wins rank or place :
We know preferment must imply disgrace.

V.

'Tis hard, indeed, to tell how much we owe
To Melbourne, Russell, Normanby, and Co. ;
And Justice strives to learn, but vainly strives,
What's due to husbands, and how much to wives.
But soon, no doubt, will come the reckoning day,
When Heaven, in full, each proper debt will pay.

Like some vast cloud, that hangs death-charged on high,
Ere yet it hurls its lightnings from the sky,
A nation's indignation, scorn, and hate,
In one black mass, poised on the wings of Fate,
Glooms overhead, and darkens every hour
With added wrath, and still increasing power:
Oh ! for some spell, to bid its vengeance fall,
And crush these tyrants—crush them one and all !

Scarce breathed the wish, when, lo ! a passing bell
Flings on the gale its long expected knell:
The hour is come,—the last faint struggle 's o'er,
And the vile Melbourne Ministry 's no more.
From tongue to tongue the rapid tidings fly,
Thrill through each breast, and speak in every eye ;
Tower peals to tower, and tells the joyful tale
To echoing hill, and every shouting vale:
'Tis gladness all, from shore to farthest shore,
And the land feels it to its inmost core !

But, oh ! what transport in the palace reigns,
The Sovereign freed from Faction's galling chains.
Yet, on the walls, methinks, at times you trace
The shadowed profile of some lurking face ;
Lo ! there again—the lineaments revealed
Of some dark knave, behind the throne concealed,

As though its owner still had leave to tread
The spot where long he flattered, fawned, and fed:
'Tis nought but fancy that some form pourtrays
On which the eye hath long been forced to gaze:
Such as some horrid dream will leave behind,
To haunt, despite the will, the troubled mind;
For who would dare, now that the Sovereign bends
Her long-closed ear to England's truest friends;
And, in her presence, by express command,
Those that alone can save the kingdom, stand:
In such an hour as this—yes, who shall dare
To deem her faithless who can speak so fair.
Yet, there again, protruding from that screen—
Was not that Melbourne's head an instant seen?
That door a-jar betrays two peering eyes!
By heaven, the place is rife with ghosts or spies!
Like phantom shapes, woke at the wizard's call,
They people every closet, nook, and wall.
Beware! beware! where signs like these are found,
The spot is neither safe nor hallowed ground.
Away distrust! 'twere treason to believe,
Our senses all but mock us and deceive;
The Sorcerer's wand lies shivered near the throne,
And long ere this the devil has claimed his own,
By purchase his, beyond redemption's hope,
Though here they 'scaped their meet reward—the rope.

But time would fail on every scene to dwell,
Besides, the farce is known to all full well :
“ *The Resignation*,” as got up of late,
On royal boards, by ministers of state ;
With all the strength and property at hand,
And all the foreign help they could command :
Court fools and jugglers, vaulters, climbers, crawlers,—
The German Legion—beggars—Irish brawlers—
Crown, sceptre, throne—stars, garters, collars, ermine,
Lords, knights, and squires, with store of palace vermin ;
Toothless old ewes that fain would pass for lambs,
And by the Premier used as battering rams,
Which, when his lordship’s wit and logic fail
To move the stubborn throne, will oft prevail :
With all th’ “ *et cætera* ” troop of household queans,
That manage all things now behind the scenes,—
She “ Jacks in office,” charged with both the cares
Of royal closets, and of state affairs ;
Their shoulders bent beneath a double load,
Like asses panniered, or by two bestrode:
Now pinning dresses, and now penning speeches,
Which some vain henpecked fool at sunset preaches :
One moment busied with some new quadrille,
The next shut up with Minto, Rice, or Hill ;
Descanting now on petticoats and hoops,
Now forming leagues, and now dispatching troops :

Anon, inflamed with rage, dissolved in tears,
Or selling places, or creating peers,
Or bending, still as death, all eyes and ears:—
A mongrel race, a wily, oily train,
Late *inexpressibly* equipped by “Swain,”
Our Queen’s own man of buckram and of leather,
Whose patent small-clothes laugh at time and
weather,
And make such music as they chirp along,
You well might deem they harboured birds of song;
Their nether parts—(nor here mistake my words,
I mean the women, not the singing birds,)—
Their nether parts now shine like mermaids tails,
Encased in buckskin, and adorned with scales;
And strange to see how each amphibious daughter
Excels in syren arts, and scenes of slaughter,
Glides through the parks, and o’er Virginia water,

Truth must allow—sneer, cavil, as you will,—
The piece got up with more than common skill;
The author, too, by much himself surpassed,
This work eclipses all his labours past;
The thought was happy, though it may be said
It could have birth but in a villain’s head—
The first bright thought—such as we sometimes find,
When least expected, flash upon the mind.

MEN AND MEASURES; OR,

Nor is this praise the only praise that's due,
The plot is full of interest, and new ;
For search the drama, or on history pore,
You'll find it not in any page of yore ;
Though should the present, or a future age,
Adapt the subject to some other stage,
Poetic Justice will the moral mend,
And bring the hero to a different end.

Behold him now ! again in place installed,
The throne degraded, and the Queen enthralled :
Again enthralled, and though in chains of gold,
Not less a prisoner in her narrow fold.

Long had this man, and zealously as long,
Pursued the tortuous ways of guilt and wrong ;
With care avoiding every turn to right,
As 'twere a serpent basking in his sight :—
Once lost, and early lost, an honest name,
With all his soul he panted after shame ;
To gain his end the basest means he used,
His rank dishonoured, and each trust abused :
To war with good seemed both his choice and fate,
And what he'd wronged he soon began to hate ;
Whilst on he pressed, and every path he trod,
Led far from fame, and farther from his God.

He deemed himself, though drawing towards his end,

Too young to die, and far too old to mend ;
And, like an onion, midst the fair was seen,
' With head all hoary, and with tail all green.'
When, 'twixt his eye and his ambition lay
A dark deep gulf, that yawned across his way ;
That limit where your half-bred villains pause,
Checked or by shame, or conscience, or the laws.
What shall *he* do—it seems to foe and friend
His reign must cease—his dark career must end—
But 'tis not so—with all the desperate strife
Of one who fights, and feels he fights for life,
He plunges in, whatever ills betide,
And onward struggling, gains the farther side,—
The last remains of honour left behind,
Defiled—disgraced—the meanest of his kind—
Then upwards springs, and climbs with clinging hands
The longed-for eminence, until he stands
In dark relief, 'gainst Virtue's cloudless sky
Upon the pinnacle of Infamy !
There, in enduring bronze, behold the man !
Scorn of the world, and take him down who can.

But here awhile let thoughts of vengeance sleep;
Approach that bier, and weep with those that weep!

